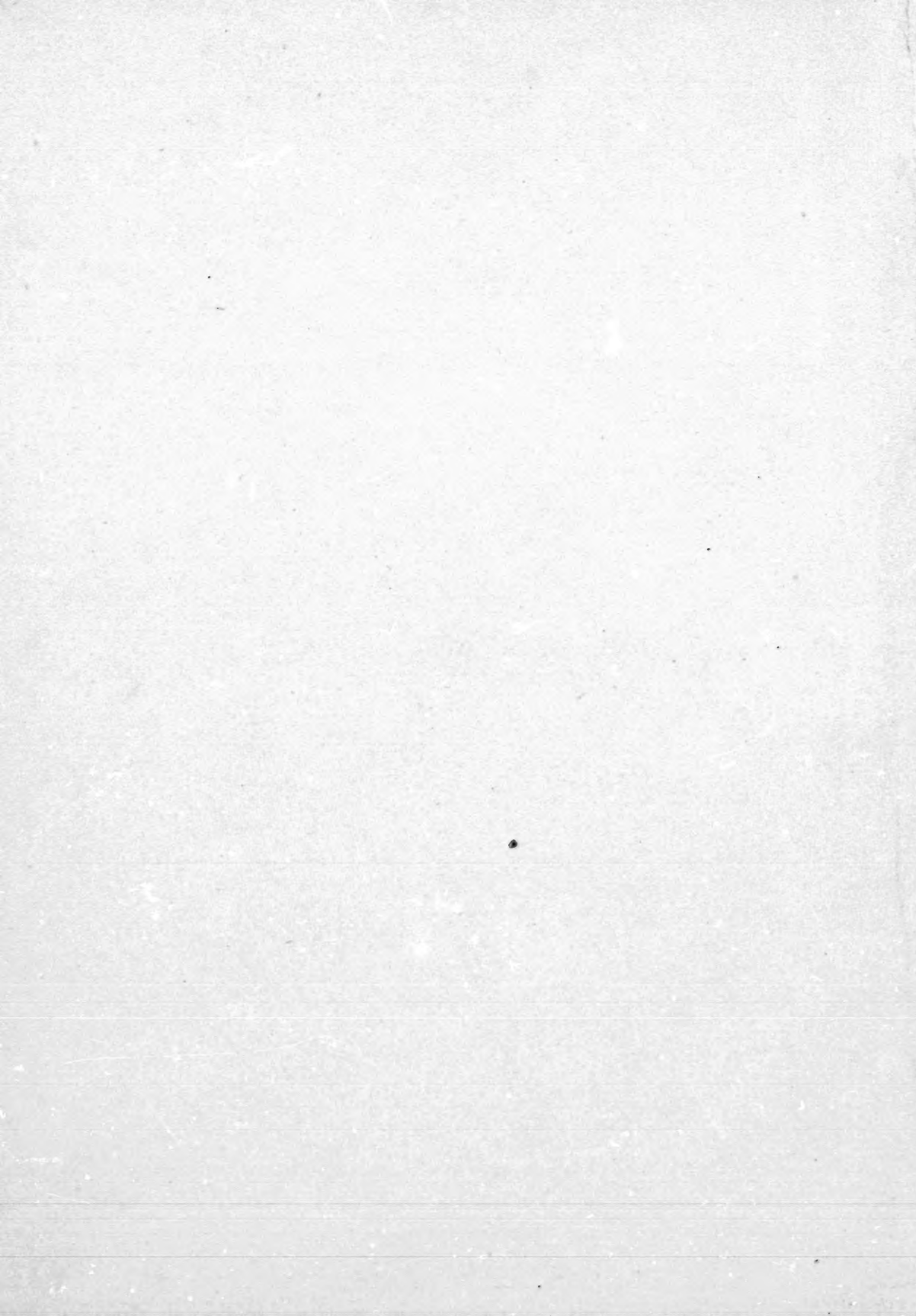




❖❖ **DRIFT.** ❖❖



JEAN E. U. NEALIS.



WITH A PREFACE

BY

MRS. JAMES SADLIER.

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To

My Children in Heaven:

Francis,
Mary, Margaret.



Oh, Saints in Heaven may pray with earnest will
And pity for their weak and erring brothers,
But there is a prayer in Heaven more tender still—
The *little children* pleading for their *mothers*.

ADELAID A. PROCTOR.



Only the "Drift" that is idly tossed
On the changing tides that ebb and flow,—
Pieces of "wreck" from fair hopes—lost
In life's troubled waters, long ago.

Only the "Drift" that comes floating in,
Some to be gathered from off the shore,
Some, like the dreams of what "might have been,"
To go softly out, and be seen no more.



PREFACE.



IT is with very great pleasure that I comply with the request of the amiable and gifted Author of this unpretending little volume, to write a preface thereto. To my thinking, a preface is hardly necessary to such a collection of poetic flowers, springing direct from a tender, loving heart, and shedding their own sweet perfume of love and sorrow and religious fervor on all who may come within their gracious influence. Yes, truly, these charming versicles do, in the words of our greatest American poet :

“Gush from the heart,
As rain from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start.”

What Ossian calls the “joy of grief” runs, like a deep undertone, through the poetry of Mrs. Nealis. It is evidently a sorrowful mysterious joy to her finely-tuned mind to sing of the sorrows that have darkened her life ; and those who know her history can fully understand the piteous wail that ever and anon rings out like the wild death-song of the old Celtic “keeners.”

The touching dedication, “To my Children in Heaven ;” strikes the key-note of a tragic and pathetic life epic. Some of

those children, so tenderly beloved, were snatched from a mother's arms under circumstances the most distressing, and their early death crushed all hope and brightness out of that mother's life, till then so full of promise.

Yet nothing is more admirable than the true Christian resignation wherewith the sacrifice of those loved ones is made on the altar of the heart whose life they had been. Only the most tender piety, the most assured hope, could have drawn from out that crushed heart the exquisite and most perfect acts of sublime resignation to the Divine will which we find so touchingly expressed in many of these poems.

But the poems, although for the most part sad and pathetic, are not all of a sombre character.

We here and there come upon rare glimpses of the beautiful inner life over which sorrow has too early cast a veil. We find graceful communings with nature in her calm and restful solitudes,—genial outpourings of grateful affection are there, elicited by the sympathetic kindness of many friends, which has, all through, cheered the lone heart of the gentle poetess in her passage through the gloomy Vale of Shadows.

The joy of that purity and peace which, like the beauty of the King's daughter, mentioned in Holy Writ, is all from within, that joy shines through even the darkest pages of the little volume in which so many tender poetic fancies are enshrined.

Amid this "Drift" which goes floating out from the quiet

ways of a gentle, unobtrusive life to the mighty stream wherein all human lives and human interests commingle, much genuine poetry may be found, especially by those whose hearts are tuned to the sad music which forms the ceaseless monotone of the World's great voice. It is a modest message of love and peace, and yearning sympathy to those who have, like the author, suffered much and loved much, and whose hopes, blighted on earth, are anchored in heaven.

That the message may be welcomed with kindly greeting by that "gentle public" whose favor is humbly sought by all authors, whether of high or low degree in the world of letters, I sincerely hope, for the sake of the modest aspirant, who now presents herself for the first time to its notice.

M. A. S.

MONTREAL, CANADA,
June 12, 1884.





POEMS.

AT LAST.

“Credo,—in remissionem peccatorum.”

Lord it is late, I know,
 Yet I have come, opprest,
With the great burden of my Past,
Weary and heavy laden, O, at last,
 I've come, for *rest* !

My patient Lord ! whose loving yoke
 So easy is, and light !
I have left *all*, and come to Thee ;
To struggle longer with the world would be
 But an unequal fight.

I thought I was so strong and brave,
 In years gone by ;
I marked my flaunting banner, “ Victory,”
But, ah ! 'twas for my foes, not me—
 So weak was I !

Yet, Lord, I come, tho' it be dark and late,
 O let me in ;
Vanquished and humbled, yet I would,
Make some poor reparation, if I could,
 For what has been.

I have left *all* for Thee—and yet there are
 Memories that cling
 To the old life, that I shall live no more—
 Of love and parting, death, and suffering sore—
 To me that bring

Anguish intolerable !
 Yet still

I do resign them to Thy holy keeping,—
 'Tis meet and just ; and I, the whirlwind reaping,
 But do Thy will.

* * * * *

I see the Altar Lamp is burning yet,
 Just as in days gone by ;
 I see the Crucifix of silver gleaming
 Above the lamp's unwearied beaming,
 Waiting—for *me* !

All is the same ; 'tis I alone am changed,
 By care and sin ;
 O, from the bitter ways of wrong and strife,
 From the dark memories of a wasted life—
 Lord, let Thy pilgrim in !

A holy calm o'er my unquiet soul
 Comes gently stealing—
 I have come back, O Great Unchanging One,
 With darkness past and a new life begun
 Where I am kneeling ;

Kneeling in hope— before Thy blessed Shrine
 In *hope* at length !
And with a rain of sad remorseful tears
I wash away the burden of past years,
 And plead for *strength*.

Strength to be faithful to the very end—
 Thy grateful, loving slave for evermore to be :—
And now—beneath Thy Feet my heart I lay,
In night or morning, life or death, I pray
Thy Holy Will be done—in me— alway,
 Eternally !

April, 1881.

LONGING.

I wonder if the violets blossom still
 In the old familiar places,
Or if they, too, are changed and gone
Or altered—growing pale and wan—
 Like the well-beloved faces !

I wonder if the tall green rushes grow
 Beside the peaceful river,
Or if upon its bosom, floating down,
The autumn leaves are falling, red and brown
Drifting slowly past the quiet town,
 Just the same as ever !

I wonder if the maple leaves are turning
 To a crimson sea of glory,
Far up, upon the dear old "College Hill,"
And down below the "Old Bridge," by the Mill,
And if sweet "Maple Falls" are singing still
 The same romantic story !

Ah, no, the leaves and whispering streams
 Have changed and altered voices,
That hold no more the tunes I used to treasure,
Nor sing the old sweet strains of hope and pleasure,
But sadly mingle, in a mournful measure,
 With other, harsher noises.

O, Fredericton, I see your beauteous gardens
 In my dreaming only,
 And wake, with wistful longing—weak and vain ;
 For me to tread, your pleasant streets again
 Would be to find, with a remorseful pain,
 The graveyard walks less lonely !

O “ Hermitage ” beside the peaceful river,
 How I pray with restless yearning
 For the quiet of thy long-desired breast—
 For the shelter of the Cross that guards *their* rest,
 For thy “ welcome ” to a long-expected guest,
 A wanderer, *home* returning !

Oct., 1882.

SAND COVE BEACH.

Sitting alone upon the beach,
 With weary heart and hand,
I watch the slowly-creeping tide
 Come in across the sand.

Thinking of *one* I loved, who watched
 The salt tides ebb and flow,
And gathered shells and stones with me—
 Only a year ago.

Only one little year ago
 Since he stood at my side,
And, now,—I watch, alone, alone,
 The coming of the tide!

And as the waves come creeping up,
 And almost touch my feet,
I think of all that *came* with him—
 The love and joy so sweet.

Then, as the tide goes slowly out,
 Over the pebbly shore,
I think of all that *went* with *him*,
 To come back—nevermore!

* * * * * *

A mist is rising, damp and chill,
 From off the heaving bay.
My heart is breaking, and mine eyes
 Are blinded—by the spray!

Night must be near, dim shadows brood
O'er all the land about :
And, God knows best ! and, life is short,
And,—the moaning tide is out.

Aug., 1879.

A SHEPHERD TRUE.

“Nunc scio vere quia misit Dominus Angelum Suum, et eripuit me.”

Eager and earnest, he spoke to me,
Kindly, yet firmly, till
I *had* to listen to his words,
Sorely against my will.

For I wondered much what it was to *him*,
My sorrowful bitter life !
Or why he should seek to probe its pain
Or learn of its wrongs and strife.

And I only half-believed him, when
He said, *he* would be my *friend*;
I had trusted too often, and knew too well
How such professions end.

And *he* might tire of me, too,
When he should come to know
How selfish, and bitter, and cruel,
A human heart *can* grow.

For he was young, and all the world
Lay bright before his gaze,
While *I* was only reaping the tears
I had sown in other days.

Still, there was something in his voice
 Different from all the rest ;
 And a strange and wistful wonder
 Arose within my breast :

Was there then, in this selfish world,
 To *me* so bitter grown,
 One who would really *prove* a friend,
 For the love of God alone ?

Yes, one who had lost all sight of *self*
 When he put the world aside,
 To follow the bleeding Footsteps
 Of his Master—crucified.

Whose gift was the gift of “ *winning souls* ”
 From the grasp of sin away—
 Oh ! surely it *was* God’s angel
 Who spoke to me that day,

And broke the heart that for years had been
 As hard as a heart of stone ;
 For his words were Christlike, and his face
 Pure as an angel’s shone !

* * * * *

Gladly I follow the shepherd true
 God’s love to me hath given,
 To guide my faltering steps aright
 On the narrow path to Heaven,

With a reverent love, no words of speech
Its meaning can supply ;
For I think when I meet him anywhere,
I should kneel till he passes by !

For the peace of God shines on his face,
And love of God his deeds inspire,
And his heart for lost and wandering souls
Burns with a holy fire.

His patient zeal no respite knows
No bounds his charity,
And the prayers and blessings of the poor
His strength and crown shall be.

March, 1881.

MY CRUCIFIX.

‘ Mihi absit gloriari, nisi in cruce Domine Nostri Jesu Christi.’

O last and only treasure left
 Of many long, sad years !
 I clasp thee to my breaking heart
 And bathe thy wounds with tears.
 My Crucifix !—What endless peace
 Thou shewest unto me !
 Comfort in sorrow, hope in pain
 And joy in agony.

Father and Mother, Sister true,
 And Brother kind thou art,
 Husband and Son, my Crucifix !
 Close clasped against my heart.
 When earthly friends grew cold or changed,
 When cherished ones have died,
 Thou didst remain, *unchanging, true,*
 My dear Lord, crucified.

As from my desolated home,
 A pilgrim lone, I go
 To follow thee, O best beloved,
 No other love to know,
 What wonder if I hold thee close
 Against my aching breast,—
 Who but thyself can comfort me ?
 What other, send me *rest* ?

When dews of death my flesh shall chill,
And my soul shrinks in fear,
O *then!* these failing eyes shall seek
 Thee, Crucifix, most dear!
My last, long, lingering, loving gaze
 Thy dying form shall trace,
The last of earth I e'er may know
 Sha'l fade,—upon thy face.

And then, beneath my coffin lid,
 By stiffened fingers pressed,
My blessed Crucifix shall lie
 Upon my quiet breast,
Beneath hands clasped in mute appeal
 For—an Eternal Rest.

July, 1881.

NEARING HOME.

To Sr. P.

Do you sometimes, in the twilight,
Hear the far-off slumberous roar
Of the waves of peace that, ceaseless,
Roll along th' eternal shore?

Do you, in the calm, still midnight,
Sometimes think the voyage is past,
Think you hear the keel's low grating
On the shining sands at last?

Are the world's tumultuous noises
Full of infinite complaint,
And the wrangling, and the fretting
Growing strangely dim and faint?

And do sounds of chants celestial
Lay a spell on tired eyes,
And soothe to gentlest slumbering
With their restful harmonies?

Does a longing for the Vision
Burn and fire all your breast,
With so sweet yet fierce a yearning
That it cannot be expressed?

O, when the "seeming" over,
 You have calmly entered in,
Purged from every taint or shadow
 Of the smallest stain of sin,

When your eyes behold the splendor
 Of your Bridegroom's majesty,
And your soul is steeped in rapture,
 Sister—— *will* you think of *me*?

Ah, some morning to the Chapel
 I shall go, to find *you* gone,
To miss the patient smile that lit
 That face—so pale and wan.

To miss the kind clasp of a hand,
 And the earnest voice that said,
" *Be patient !*" Who shall comfort me
 That day—when *you* are *dead* !

A FAREWELL.

A stranger and a pilgrim, I
 Sought once a quiet rest—
 Wearied and worn, and here I found
 A home, secure and blest.

Now, I must leave it, to return
 To the old life once more,
 But, ah, 'tis so reluctantly,
 So fearful and heart-sore !

I gather up my scattered work,
 And put it all away.
 Thro' the open window comes the sound
 Of children as they play.

I take my faded flowers, too,
 And kiss them ere I throw
 Them out upon the Convent roof
 Down to the steps below ;

Then turn, and look around the room,
 My peaceful home so long,
 And all my heart swells up and breaks
 In weeping, fierce and strong.

O must I leave you, little room,
 That the setting sun shines on ?
 Some better, happier soul, perhaps,
 May dwell here when I'm gone.

To-morrow I shall stand without
This peaceful Convent's door,
And bid the gentle Nuns good-bye,
Perhaps forevermore.

"Forever more" I said? Ah, no!
We shall meet again, I pray,
When all *need* of parting shall have passed
Forever more away;

Where there's no more gathering up the threads
Of unfinished work laid past,
When toil has ceased, and rest has come
To all weary ones at last.

* * * *

Now the fair white Convent tower fades,
In the early morning gray,
As I watch to the last its cross on high,
Shining golden and bright against the sky,
And, comforted—I know not why—
I go, on my outward way.

Sept., 1881.

THE REASON.

To. Sr. M. P.

You say the songs I sing
 Seem all one strain,
 That thro' each one there runs
 Some sad refrain.

It is because my harp
 Is strung for *me*,
 By Hands Divine, upon
 A *minor key*.

And, where I fain would sing
 Of joy or praise,
 The sweetest chords I strike
 Are *sad*—always.

Ah, soon my mournful harp
 Unstrung shall be ;
 Its sad vibrations hushed
 And stilled, for *me*.

Perhaps in Heaven it may
 Be tuned again
 To thrill with songs that hold
 No notes of pain.

VOX DEI.

“ Be still, and bear it all,
The shame, and wrong
The cruel taunt, whose poisoned sting,—
Hath so embittered everything.
It won't be long !

It cannot last forever ,
Stay where you are, be *still*,
Bear *all* in patience, for *God's* sake. ”
It was the Voice of God that spake,
And I *tried* to say “ I will ; ”

But O, it was not, from my *heart*,
That still begged piteously,
For the calm quiet of a different life,
A respite from the never-ending strife
That so encompassed me.

Again and yet again, importunate,
I prayed to *go* ;
I wearied Him, complaining, day by day,
While kind, yet firm, He ever bid me stay,
'Tis better so.

“ There is no “ easy way ” to follow Christ,
No resting-place,
Upon *His road* ; but, though the way be long,
The battle is not *always* to the *strong*,
Nor to the swift the race.

“ But, to the *patient* hearts who *bear*
 In loving *faith*,
He will go with them, on their lonely way,
 And, tho the *world* despise them, *He* will stay,
 Faithful, to death.

“ Lift up your cross, poor child,
 Nor fear to fall,
 Unquestioning obedience is best,
 Strength *will* be given you, and—for the rest,
 Trust God for all.”

At last, I understood, and stooped
 To kiss the rod ;
 My poor despised cross ! and, since, rejoice,
 Obeying, in His wise Anointed's voice,
 The Voice of God !

FROZEN FLOWERS.

Poor little flowers ! are you all
 Blasted with the frost's cold breath ?
So green and fair you were yesterday,
 Now— touched by the hand of Death.

Poor little flowers ! Gifts you were
 From the friends of a summer's day,
But the summer is gone and—dearer things
 Than flowers must fade away.

Poor little flowers ! Your drooping leaves
 Tell of hopes that can die in a night,
Of a colder frost, and a bitterer death,
 And a darker, ghastlier, blight !

Poor little flowers ! I will bring you in,
 And hide your dead beauty away —
I have hidden a blacker death than this
 In the grave of my heart —to-day.

Dec., 1882.

“FOR THE LAST TIME.”

It is all over, and the lights are out,
The Missal closed, the Mass is done,
And the dear Nuns, like shadows, one by one
Have left the chapel, and we are alone,
My God and I—My God, whose Will is done !

Whose Will is done—so be it evermore!
But we, my soul, must pile the sods up high
Upon this corpse, that was *so dear* to you and me,
This last poor “human consolation” that doth lie,
With white, dumb lips, sealed for Eternity.

Fill in the grave, and heap the stones up high,
It must not “rise again” ! It is *dead*—for aye.
We have done with it, my soul and I, to-day !
We have sinned, we have trusted in earth and clay,
And it has failed us. Let us kneel and pray ;

Pray in the silence, by this new made-grave,
Pray that God only, from henceforth, may be
Our refuge in the storm ; that none but He
May ever comfort us ; and O, my soul, that we
May kiss the Hand that smites us so relentlessly ;

Yet we may weep, poor soul,—*that* is no sin,
We cannot help it, God will not deny
Us this, our last poor solace. Like a Litany
Each salt tear pleads—"Be merciful to me,"
It is the last, last, time.—"Beati Mortui!"

It is all over, and the lights are out,
The Missal closed, the Mass is said,
And we go out into the empty world, to tread
New paths, and learn new lessons, and be led
Another way.—"Beati Mortui!"

Dec. 1st., 1882.

FOR ME.

“ Et desiderabunt mori, et fuget mors ab eis.”

O mother earth, in years gone by,
I've loved upon your breast to lie,
And, looking upward to the sky,
Between the trees' green canopy,
Have thought that *life* was *sweet* ; but now,
With breaking heart and furrowed brow,
I only ask — your charity,
O mother earth, make room for *me*.

A little corner, all alone,
With never mark of cross or stone,
But just the tangled soft grey moss,
Or winter snow to drift across ;
Then, when the morning, sweet and fair,
Shines down upon me, sleeping there,
With placid face, turned to the skies,
Its glory will not blind mine eyes ;

Or when, at noon, the woods prolong
The burden of the birds' clear song,
Their maddest, sweetest minstrelsy
Will have no power to waken me ;
And when the silent night comes down,
And broods o'er valley, hill, and town,
No deeper peace can ever be
Than that which will have come for *me*.

BY THE FIRELIGHT.

I sit alone, this blessed Christmas night,
Amid the silence of my lonely room,
And watch the flickering sad firelight
Throw ghostly shadows in the quiet gloom.

Ah, me ! the house, so strangely still has grown,
I miss the Christmas songs that used to be,
And sitting, silent by the fire alone,
I sadly wonder if *this* can be *me* ?

This grey-haired woman, with such wistful face,
Who from the mantle glass, looks wondering down,
Where the red firelight throws a shadowy grace
On weary, folded hands and sombre gown.

Now, there are pictures hanging on the wall,
Whose sweet child-faces keep me company,
Whose long-stilled voices answer at my call,
And my dead baby nestles on my knee.

And my own love, my first-born and my pride,
His head upon my shoulder, as of old,
In mute protecting love kneels at my side,
And strong young arms his mother's neck enfold.

Another face, angelic, radiant, sweet,
Crowned with a wreath of shining golden hair,
Looks up from where she sitteth at my feet,
And smiles, my blessed one ! upon me there.

'There are two other shadows near my side,
That fade and vanish in the deepening gloom,
Yet seem to wave a blessing as they glide,
In solemn silence, from this haunted room.

So, tho' the house is still, this Christmas night,
And tho' things are not as they used to be,
I am not lonely in the warm firelight,
My dear, dead children have been here with me !

* * * * *

But the gloom deepens, and the ashes grey
Drop stealthily into the empty grate,—
I am alone once more, they could not stay
But in a more enduring Home they wait ;

They *wait* ! and well I know they pray, for me
I shall not always be alone on Christmas Day,
With *shadows* comforted, but hope to be
With *all* my loved ones, in sweet company,
"After a while," when God shall please, and we
Have *all* reached *Home*, no more to "go away."

Xmas. 1882.

AT SUNSET.

With heavy heart and blinded eyes, I look,
And watch the sun go down on Memramcook.

A lurid line against the darkening sky
Foretells the day is done ; and wistfully

I think of how my holiday is past
And to the bitter bonds that bind so fast

I must return once more. How like a dream
These hours of restful happiness shall seem !

A dream that I have been and talked with Saints,
A dream that with the morning fades and faints ;

And I awake to feel the iron chain,
That frets and chafes, with a relentless pain.

O Memramcook, with all my heart I pray
I may return to you some happier day ;

I may return to find, if so God wills,
His peace among thine everlasting hills !

Dec., 1882.

MY KNIGHT.

I watch your portrait, till there glows
 A halo round your head,
 And those mute lips half part and smile,
 Your eyes look kindly all the while,
 And I am comforted.

I watch that picture, till I think
 The lips are saying this :
 "Tho' far away, be sure, that I am *true*,
 And many times a day I think of you,
 And many times, I bless !"

I watch that picture, till there seems
 A presence very near,
 A tender presence like a faint perfume
 That fills and softly glorifies the room
 Like answered prayer.

I watch your picture, till there falls
 On folded hands a tear,
 And, somehow, all these watchings end
 In, "God protect and bless my friend,
 My brave true Knight and dear !"

DRIFTING.

O, I have clutched at straws
 My whole life long,
But the eternal tide still bears me on,
 And, one by one, my fickle straws are gone.

Ever and ever sure,
 The last would stay;
Like all the rest, it, too, floats far away,
 And leaves me sinking at the close of day,

So, now, I fold my hands
 Upon my breast
And, looking up to Heaven,
 Lay *still* and rest,
Nor heed, nor care, *what* drifteth by—
 My heart and hope in yonder sky.

No more on brittle reeds
 I lean,—at length,
I trust in *stronger* love,
 In *surer* strength;
Beyond the ocean line, my sun goes down,
 But One upholdeth me, I shall not drown!

Feb., 1883.

ASHES.

I knelt by the open fire to-day,
 And laid
 My Sacrifice upon the coals, and then,
 With anguish that no hand may pen,
 I prayed.

With dull, dry, aching eyes I watched
 Them burn,
 Only a few old letters, half a score,
 Poor relics of a dream that may no more
 Return.

Ah ! How they crisped and writhed, as if
 In pain !
 Poor leaves, whose unforgiven sin was such
 Must needs be cleansed by fire : ah, so much
 In vain !

It might have been my tortured heart
 I laid
 Upon those burning coals, such dread I felt,
 As, dumb with suffering, to-day I knelt
 And prayed,

Prayed that I might never " dream " again,
 To wake
 And find the world so empty and so cold,
 To feel my heart, beneath my raiments' fold,
 Fast break—

Prayed for the coming of a Day of Rest,
When I
Need look no longer for "kind words," nor ask
For love,—but only lay aside the mask,
And die.

This was the last ! The *one* thing I had left.
O loving Christ,
What am I in Thy sight but dust and clay !
Accept my Sacrifice, Just God, and say
" It hath sufficed."

THE BELLS.

"Etenim illuc manus tua deducet me! "

'Thro the clear frosty air there swells
The sweet melodious music of the bells,
Whose harmony my soul with rapture fills,
Till their last echo dies among the hills.

Along the winding road, and down the street,
Across the valley bridge, with willing feet,
They come unto the House where God doth dwell,
Led by the music of that sweet-voiced bell.

And all along the snow-capped hills the breeze
Makes answering echo, thro' the leafless trees,
To those clear bells slow-swinging, solemn, there,
Whose sweet tones vibrate in the frosty air.

O wide-spread valley, gleaming in the sun,
Across whose whiteness those dark waters run,
I think my soul is like that stream that flows,
Athwart the silver glory of thy spotless snows ;

Among *these* souls, whose whiteness rivals thine,
A shadow on their brightness is this soul of mine !

Yet, who can tell,
But some day, not far off, that sweet-toned bell
Shall ring for even *me* that all is well.
And I, so long by stormy tempests driven,
May find a peaceful harbor, *close* to *Heaven*.

Memramcook, Feb., 1883.

ON THE PIER.

Like those who stand upon the beach,
And shade their eyes with nervous hands,
To watch their long-lost ships come in,
From weary voyages in far lands,

I stand to-day upon the pier,
And shade my tired eyes, to see
The cold grey waters, rough and deep,
That bear no tidings home to *me*.

To see the rocks where, long ago,
My ship went down, in sight of home,
To hear the billows heave, and break,
Against the pier, in hissing foam.

I stand and shade mine eyes, and long,
With eager longing, fain to see
A star arise from *out* the blue
Of yonder firmament, for *me*;

A star that brightens all the sky,
My evening star, for which I wait,
Whose glory blindeth, perhaps because
It dawns for me so late, so late.

Yet as I slowly loosen hold
On "love, life, all things," and decrease,
That star shall lend a tender light
As I go down to rest and peace.

* * * *

O star of hope, I see you rise,
Clear, radiant, calm, above the sea,
So far beyond the wrecks that lie
Between thy gracious face and me.

St. John, Feb., 1883.



AT MEMRAMCOOK.

"Magnificat Domino facere nobiscum: facti sumus letantes."



AT ST. JOSEPH'S ALTAR.

During the "Novena," March 18, 1883. St. Thomas Church, Memramcook.

O, send me not away !
At thy dear home in Nazareth
Thou wouldst have bid me " stay,"
If, a tired beggar, travel-stained,
My weary feet, thy door had gained !

Then send me not away,
Kind Foster Father of my King,
Outcast and poor, I pray
For leave to die here at thy shrine ;
Grant thou my prayer, *God* will grant *thine* !

O, send me not away.
Back to the bitter road I've come,
Where gloomy pitfalls lay.
Wearied, *thou, too, once*, longed for *rest*,
On desert sands,—grant my request,

And send me not away.
Soul-sick and sorrowful, I plead,
O, dear St. Joseph say :
" Poor pilgrim, all thy wandering cease,
Thou *needst* not go—remain in peace !"

O little lamps, that glow,
All red and golden, at his feet,
I would, that, even so,
Might be consumed, this heart of mine,
Before Saint Joseph's blessed shrine.

REST AT LAST.

“Convertere anima mea in requiem tuam : quia Dominus benefecet tibi !”

Alone, with God !

O heart of mine and is it thus
So sweet a Rest has come—to us ?

Alone with God !

While morning dawns, and daylight dies,
And stars shine out from darkening skies,
The world and all it holds—forgot,
And our dark past as it were not !
O solitude, supremely blest,
O silent, satisfying rest !

Alone with God !

And all the stormy deeps pass'd o'er,
At anchor—calmed, forever more,
Beside His Tabernacle door !
Where the lone Sanctuary light
Gleams redly through the solemn night,
Like a Nun's heart that, wasting, burns,
And for His Presence pants and yearns !
So, my poor heart, tho' faint its fire,
Longs with a passionate desire
Here, 'mid the crimson shadows dim,
To stay and die—alone with Him !

Ap., 1883.

SIR GALAHAD.

Not in that palace olden,
At towered Camelot,
Where hung the banner golden,
Of bold Sir Launcelot.

Where, 'mid the ancient splendor
Of knights in armour clad,
With dreamy eyes and tender,
Mused pure Sir Galahad ;

Not where the gleaming lances,
Clashed in the tournament,
Where ladies' smiling glances
On valiant knights were bent ;

Not in that old-time story,
With marvelous legends bright,
'Mid scenes of love and glory
Dwelleth this other knight.

With spirit brave and fearless,
With heart as light and glad,
With soul as true and blameless,
As that other Galahad.

Upon His banner shining
" St. Joseph's lilies " bright,
With shamrocks intertwining—
A fair and pleasant sight !

Upon His shield there gloweth,
Bright with a silver gloss,
A quaint device, which sheweth
“Two anchors and a Cross.”

No silver trumpets sounded,
When the challenge forth He hurled,
And they came out to meet Him,
Sin, Satan, and the World.

But their armor He hath riven,
They lie vanquished at His feet,
And the trumpets up in Heaven
Ring ravishingly sweet!

O, when all strife is over,
And life's tournament is past,
And He shall kneel victorious,
To receive his crown at last,

Among the countless thousands
That his triumph song shall sing—
May my voice, swell the anthem
Of his royal welcoming—
When his sweet and Sinless Mother
Shall crown him Priest and King.

A VIOLIN SOLO.

With organ accompaniment, during the High Mass at St.
Joseph's Chapel, Memramcook. Feast of the Patronage of
St. Joseph, 1883.

My soul is haunted all day long
And all last night, since yesterday,
With the sweet echoing of a sound,
So beautiful, so soft, and clear,
Filled with a mystic, charmèd melody !
Thro' all my dreams, last night, I heard
It rise, and swell—then softly die away,
Like the low roll of waves along the shore ;—
Then, soaring,—with a sweet shrill harmony,
Fill all the Holy Place with ecstasy—
Vibrating, thrilling, pleading, like a soul,
Late learned to love, impetuous, eager ; with
A passionate desire to rise above
All other weaker sounds, and sing, alone !
Thus,—piercing upward, far into the sky,
With yearning inexpressible, to swell and die
Before the feet of God, in one, long, rapturous *agony* !

O perfect melody ! I hid mine eyes
As angels hide their faces with their wings ;
It was a pain to breathe, to pray ;
Thy glorious music bore my soul away,
Ah, far beyond the shifting shadows of to-day,
Straight to that Presence where no shadows stay !

O Harmony, unutterably sweet !
More touching than a Great Archangel's song,
For in its undertone there rang a sound of pain,
The yearning cry of grateful *love, forgiven*,
The wild sweet moan of *love, unsatisfied*—
That cannot *be*,—in Heaven.

O minster organs, peal your grandest swells,
And make the lofty aisles resound again !
Let all God's temple tremble with the roar
Of thy majestic chords !—but, O,
You cannot reach the *deepest depths* of love,
And thrill my soul with longings, infinite,
As did, on yestermorn, the quivering string
Of that enchanted, rare, sweet violin !

THE IRISH FLAG.

Written on the completion of the Flag for St. Patrick's
Academy, St. Joseph's College, Memramcook.

I love it ! I love it ! yes, every fold
Of that darling Flag, with its green and gold,
With its silent harp, whose every string
To a low, sweet strain seems vibrating,
And is keeping time to a happy song
That sings in my heart the whole day long.

I love it ! I love it ! Its shamrocks hold
A long-lost dream in their vines of gold,
And bound in its graceful circling wreath
Is a faithful love—more strong than death,
And no exiled Irish heart can glow
With a truer love than mine, I know !

I love it ! I love it ! Its folds of green
Are bound with no bitterer chain, I ween,
Than the iron links that, with cruel strain,
Bind my struggling heart to a life-long pain.
O, when will its "Sunburst " dawn, I wonder,
And *my* prison bars be wrenched asunder.

O, I love to think, with a proud, glad thrill,
Of its outlines, *my* hands have helped to fill,
When the hours sped upon fairy wings,—
Of the tender song that still harp sings,
Of the thoughts worked in with a golden thread
Of the thoughts to a far green isle that fled !

I love it ! I love it ! No power can drag
My heart from the folds of this dear old Flag !
I shall know, in my rest in the graveyard lone,
When the days of its darkness are past and gone
I shall know when it floats over vale and hill
In my "stranger's grave,"—I am sure I will !

I love it ! I love it ! and wonder much
If another's hand could as loving touch
Its green and gold, where the shamrocks run,
Or caress it as fondly as I have done,
Or pray with a yearning as strong as mine
For the sun of its freedom at last to shine :
When far over turret, and tower, and crag,
It shall float in proud splendor, the Irish Flag !

April, 1883.

VENI, JESU.

Sung at the Offertory by College Choir, during the Mass for the
Boys' First Communion, Feast of Pentecost, May 13, 1883,
St. Joseph's Chapel, Memramcook.

"Veni, Veni, Jesu!" Flute-like and soft
The boys' sweet voices bear the strain aloft,
And *Thou wilt* come, O Holy Child, to be
Their *food* to-day; "O Jesu, amor mi!"

O Boy of Nazareth! we weeping pray
That Thou wilt strengthen these dear boys to-day
For their hard battle, that has just begun—
Shield them from sin, O sinless Mary's Son!

Let no temptation have the power to sway
The hearts that Thou wilt sanctify to-day;
O be their loved Companion until death—
Dear, Blessed Child! Jesus of Nazareth!

And when in days to come they shall have gone
Back to the reckless world, its snares among,
Let nothing come Thy heart and *theirs* between,
But make them like Thine own, pure, white, and clean.

Parting and death may dim the coming years,
And fill their hearts with pain, their eyes with tears,
O teach them *then*, how precious *Thou* canst be!
Who cannot die!—O Jesu, amor mi!

“Veni, Veni, Jesu !” Flute-like and soft
Those seraph voices bear the strain aloft,—
In life, in death, for all eternity
Keep Thou their souls—O Jesu, amor mi !

O noble Priest, your burning words have rent
Their hearts with love for this sweet Sacrament,
Ah, who could hear your touching words to-day
And go *unmoved* from their appeal away ?

“ O Veni, veni, Jesu ! ” Sweet refrain,
It floods my soul with a deep, nameless pain ;
Kind, tender Shepherd, all I have is Thine,
Yet take unto Thy Breast this *lamb of mine*.

Guard his young life, and make it *all* Thine own,
That, when a few more restless years have flown,
He may not ask to leave the hallowed place
Where he to-day has found such wondrous grace.

O call him from the world's deceit and guile,
Its hollow friendships and its mocking smile,
Its broken faith, and cruel treachery—
And bid him, Royal Master, *follow Thee !*

O veni, Jesu ! into all our souls
The while that thrilling music Heavenward rolls
To them, to us, life's dearest treasure be
And *peace* in death, O Jesu, amor mi !

*

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*

Dear, happy children knelt the rail around,
With tear-stained faces, yet in peace profound,
God bless you ! every one, we humbly pray,
And keep you *always* what you are to-day !

LAST GREETING.

Thro' dead leaves all damp and sodden
 With the rain of yesterday,
Over grass, sere and down-trodden,
 Bleak and lonely, lies my way.

On the bridge I wait, and hearken,
 For the last time, to those bells,
And my tears the landscape darken,
 As that music Heavenward swells.

Darkens, like a twilight falling,
 And the flowing waters seem
Far-off voices, softly calling,
 Like the voices in a dream.

By-gone joys, like corpse-lights burning,
 Gleam along my backward track ;
But for *them* there's no returning,
 Nor, for me, a going back.

At the future, spread before me,
 Heart and soul in terror shrink,
'Tis a black sky looming o'er me,
 Circled by a sea of ink !

And I linger, sadly saying
 Mute farewell to vale and hill,
 Faint and fearful, yet obeying
 God's unfathomable Will.

Soon, when heart and brain are aching,
 With their helpless weight of pain,
 Thoughts of Memramcook shall waken
 Failing strength to life again.

I shall see it, O, how often !
 In the weariness to come,
 When the twilights fade and soften,
 And my heart grows sick for " Home. "

Now, I pray, with lips that quiver
 In a pain no words can tell,
 " *God bless your TRUE hearts forever,*
 Memramcook, a long farewell ! "

All-Souls Day, 1883.

IN UMBRA MORTIS.

O mine own brother, let me hold your hand,
The day so strangely cold and dark has grown,
I feel the end is near, so long desired,
And I am glad,—for I am weak and tired,
Yet fear to tread Death's awful Pass alone !

So, hold my hand a little longer still,
In soft, close clasp, and warm ; 'twill soon be o'er ;
To-morrow you may fold them as you will,
For I, beyond *man's* judgment, good or ill,
Shall have passed out, thank God, forevermore !

So, hold my hand ; it is the one last thing
I need, of human love, to comfort me,
Just hold my hand, until the night shall bring
Eternal rest, for which I'm hungering,—
Eternal rest, beyond life's stormy sea !

*Then, fold these hands, that never more shall crave
Aught that they should not ask, or asking have ;*
Close in the blinds, and, thro' the darkened room,
Let blessed candles lighten up its gloom,
And pray thou for my soul, gone to its doom,
For there is no remembrance in the grave.

THE SANCTUARY CHOIR.

Holy Cross Cathedral, Boston.

Through the vast Temple a deep silence reigned,
When, suddenly, unutterably sweet,
Rang out a voice,—like some glad soul just gained,
After long Purgatory, peace—complete.

That sighed, for very rapture ! a low sigh
Of joy ineffable. Then, like a sound
Of silver trumpets, chorus rose on high ;
I knew, at last, *some* human souls had found

Voices of Seraphs and of Cherubim,
Meet to give utterance to the psalms of praise
With which His Bride so loves to honor Him,
Her risen Spouse, upon His day of days.

While that angelic harmony arose,
In sweet unearthly chords, I held my breath,
And thought to see the Golden Gates unclosed
And lost loves come to meet me, before death !

O wondrous Choir ! O children's voices clear !
While you gave greeting to your Risen King
Adoring Angels hushed their harps to hear,
And knelt, like me, enraptured, listening !

No more my heart shall wonder wistfully,
As on the journey Heavenward I go,
What *it's* soul thrilling symphonies must be,
For I have heard their echoes here below.

And ever, till these fleshly bonds be riven,
Must long with an insatiable desire
To hear again, like a foretaste of Heaven,
The music of that Sanctuary Choir !

Easter Sunday, 1884.

DOVES.

I heard a sweet bell ring, to call,
The faint and hungry, to His Banquet sweet,
And, like a flock of startled doves,
Each answering a call she loves,
I saw His chosen nestle near His Feet,

Their white hoods waving, like the wings
Of doves around the Temple Gates, of old :
Perhaps, I thought, it *may* be so,
They pray for those who dare not go
To feast with them, because of hearts so cold !

At that, the tears came, one by one
Falling, upon my pain-wrung hands—so fast !
It must have been some strained heart-string
That with new hope was vibrating,
Because their garments touched me as they passed !

DEAD ROSES.

I kissed them, softly, reverently,
As we kiss our dead with love's last caress,
 And held them close against my heart,
 That their light touch might soothe its smart
And sweeten its waters of bitterness.

But, O, their subtle, sweet perfume
Drove spears of memory thro' my throbbing brain,
 A year ago—one year ago!—
 Earth's hopes and roses wither so—
Nothing endureth save life's ceaseless pain.

And so I laid them by, as lay
Our quiet dead, wrapped in a shroud of white,
 Then wrote a name, and then a date,
 And underneath the words—"Too late,"
And hid them all, forever out of sight.

Some day, upon a brighter shore,
Where no sweet flowers ever fade or die,
 We two shall meet, long-parted friends,
 And that glad day shall make amends
For all this bitterness of death, gone by.
 Sept., 1883.

UNANSWERED.

"Abysus abyssum invocat."

No answer ! O lost love ! no need to tell
 What depths impassable between us flow,
 What seas of sorrow, tireless rage and swell
 Between *my* life and *thine*, where all is well,
 Beyond these piercing winds and wastes of snow !

No answer ! Yet the tides that mournfully
 Come rolling in along the hollow shore
 Seem ever calling to some far-off sea,
 That answers solemnly,—but unto *me*
 Never an answer cometh, anymore.

Feb. 9, 1884.

CUM IPSO.

Only to kneel in *His* Presence,
 Low down in the dust at His Feet,
In the peace of His solemn silence,
 Unutterably sweet.

Only to feel that He knows us,
 Knows us, each one, by *name*,
And, tho' all the world may despise us,
 He loveth us just the same.

Only to know He is waiting,
 Anxiously, patiently, there
To hear, and then lovingly answer,
 The poorest and humblest prayer.

To know that, thro' all, He loves us,
 No matter how sinful or poor,
And we *cannot come too often*
 Thro' *His* ever-open door.

Only to kneel in His Presence,
 While our hearts are ready to break
With sorrow for sinning, and love for Him !
 And all for *His* dear love's sake !

Only to kneel there, imploring
 To be taken away from sin,
 Not from the fear of its punishment,
 But for fear of displeasing Him.

Only to kneel in His Presence !
 What more can Heaven bestow ?
 Only this : that, when *there*, we need never
 Away from that Presence go.

May, '82.

THE HEAVENLY COUNTRY.

(From the German.)

An humble little village lad
Once heard a pilgrim say
That he sought a "Heavenly country"
That was very "far away ;"

Whose walls were gloriously bright,
Of precious stones its gate,
Within rolled wondrous harmonies,
And—"the way to it was *straight*."

* * * * *

His little pale face all aglow,
He started,—straight ahead,
Nor turned he to the right or left,
But where the straight road led.

For long, long miles the weary child,
Toiled on, nor feared to fall,
Until he reached, at close of day,
A strange large city's wall.

He entered in, footsore and weak,
A bell was ringing clear,
He turned into a lighted church
And to the "rail," drew near.

The Altar gleamed all fair and bright,
Sweet incense filled the air,
And a glory from the Holy Place
Shone on the poor child, there,

With hands uplifted, and his face
 In rapture—all aglow !
 And when the Benediction ceased
 He never seemed to know.

* * * * *

The lights were out, save one alone,
 That burned unfailing there ;
 When Priest and Sacristan beheld
 The little pilgrim, where
 He knelt, with reverent-folded hands
 And tangled yellow hair,

Yet with a light upon his face
 It awed them much to see.
 And so they asked him, tenderly,
 Who was, and whence came, he ?

He answered softly, “ from afar,
 I came, by a long, straight way ;
This is the ‘ Heavenly Country,’ and,
 I pray you—let me stay ! ”

His head drooped, slowly, wearily—
 And fainter came his breath !
 Then on the holy altar step
 He fell asleep, in death.

Then the good Priest stooped and lifted him
 And closed his eyes, so blue,
 For thus, by the “ straight road,” had he found
 The Heavenly country true.

MY MEDAL.

Only a Medal, on
Whose silver gloss
Is carved a Burning Heart
Pierced with a cross ;
Beneath whose wreath of thorn there doth appear
Love's last bequest, a Wound made by a spear

Whose soundless depths man's thought
Can never reach,
Not even eternity
Its measure teach ;
But lonely hearts find there Home and a Friend
And sinners, coming back, peace without end !

Upon its " other side,"
Star-crowned and sweet,
Stands Heaven's Queen, with earth,
Beneath her feet.
Star of the sea, and Heaven's eternal Gate,
Our Mother ! evermore Immaculate !

Mother ! O blessed name !
How strong thou art
To thrill the pulses of
My drooping heart !
No longer " motherless," ah, " Full of Grace !
Weary and worn, I seek a little place

Among the least of those
 Who follow thee,
 Though, all unworthy, called
 Thy "Child" to be;
 Yet the unworthy and the sinful claim
 Sure help from Jesus, asked in Mary's name!

When tempted, I need only
 Look on this
 Dear Heart, lance-pierced for *me*,
 And softly kiss
 My medal, with a prayer, and humbly say
 "Let *me* not wound thee, loving Heart to-day!"

Or, when my daily cross
 Grows heavier,
 I'll turn the "other side"
 And think of *her*
 Who bore a sword-pierced heart, her *whole* life long,
 And, kissing her blest feet, grow brave and strong.

If friends should change or die,
 Or "sail away,"
 Leaving me desolate,
 Some bitter day,
 I will look on my breast, where shines the "star,"
 That pointeth heavenward, where no partings are!

So, precious Medal, lie
Upon my breast,
Each heart-throb shall proclaim,
Her praises blest ;
Lie there, to rise and fall with every breath,
Lie there, till I am cold and dumb in death.

Lie on my *silent* heart,
And *speak* for me !
O silver Heart of Christ
My passport be
Into Thy Father's house, when, all alone,
Through the dark gate of death I shall have gone !

When, trembling before Him,
My Judge most *just*,
My soul, in dread and shame,
Cleaves to the dust,
With not one word to plead why it should not
Be doomed to endless pain, lost, and forgot !

Remember, *then*, O Heart
Pierced for my sin,
My Mother pleads with thee,
To let me in !
Saying: " O Son, behold my Child, shall she
Be disappointed who has called on *me* ?

“ O, by those past sad hours
Of dread and gloom
When *I* stood by Thy cross,
And at Thy tomb !

By all the sorrow I have shared with Thee,
By all the glory thou hast given me,

“ Let not this Child of mine,
Whose soul hath cost
So dear a ransom, now
Be doomed and lost.

With deep repentance she hath mourned her sin.
Jesus, Beloved, let my daughter in.”

And O, be sure, *that Son*
Will, smiling, say

“ Have thy sweet will, my Mother,
Mine alway !

No soul you guard, shall ever die unshriven,
Or ‘ Child of Mary ’ be shut out from Heaven ! ”

Feb. 2, 1884.

PAX TECUM.

In Memoriam M. E. B.

Rage on, O wild night wind and sobbing rain,
 You may not stir
That pale, calm sleeper,—all earth's storms are *vain*
 To waken her.

O snow-white Figure, with thine arms outspread,
 And face so sweet !
Keep thou a gracious guard above this bed
 Laid at thy feet.

Whereon, amid earth's fairest blossoms strewn,
 One still more fair,
A pale and radiant Liyl, fully blown,
 Lies broken there.

The taper's flames, by low night-breezes stirred,
 Flicker and gleam
Upon that placid face, but not a word
 Disturbs her dream.

So-swift her soul hath pierced Death's dark eclipse
 And found release,
When her own angel kissed her patient lips,
 And brought her peace,

Only our sad hushed voices, speaking low,
 With measured breath,
And a strange solemn stillness, let us know
 That *this* is Death !

Else we would think she just "to sleep" had gone ;
 And, O, our breast
 Is full of envy, as we look upon
 Such perfect *rest* !

O calm, closed eyes, you never more need wake
 To tears and pain ;
 And you, O silent heart, with care shall break
 Never again.

Those waxen fingers clasp the Blessed Sign
 Of hope—God-given,
 The precious key that, thanks to Love Divine,
 Hath opened Heaven !

While, over all, that Faithful Mother stands,
 Pure, sweet, and mild,
 With yearning tenderness and outstretched hands,
 To guard her child !

Sleep, "Child of Mary," at our Mother's feet
 Her prayers will keep
All evil from her own !—So, calm and sweet,
 Sleep, Sister, sleep.

Rage on, O stormy wind and sobbing rain,
 Your fiercest sound
 Shall never waken to earth's care again
 That sleep profound.

Sept. 25, '82.

ALL.

To S. F.

O mothers, over all the earth,
 To you I make my moan :
You have your burdens, all of you,
 And each one knows her own ;
But you around whose necks a babe's arms twine
Pity me, desolate,—God took *all* mine !

I know the most of you have graves
 Where some sweet flower lies,
That drooped too soon. Yet you may look
 With loving happy eyes
On others, playing in the Spring sunshine.
O pray for *me* to-night,—God took *all* mine !

Perhaps, losing many, you have kept,
 Thro' God's kind mercy, *one*,
O when you kiss her, say : “ God help
 The mothers who have *none* ! ”
I *had four*,— but trailing mosses twine
About *his* grave and theirs ! God took *all* mine !

Not sparing *one*, although I prayed
 So *hard* to keep this last,
My little Mary,—one sweet flower!
 But,—tis a prayer gone past.
My God ! not *my* will, any more, but Thine !
All Thou hast done was best—for *me* and *mine* !

Boston, May, 1884.

TOO LATE.

I thought to clasp her hand once more,
 Once more to kiss her face ;
 Once more to hold her to my heart
 In the old fond embrace ;
 Once more to gaze into her eyes, and see,
 The old-time tenderness creep there for me.

To hear the last beat of her heart,
 Dear heart ! that only knew
 How to be loving, past all words,
 And most sublimely true ;
 The heart that never drew a selfish breath,
 Thro' change and sorrow, " Faithful unto Death !"

All yesterday, while journeying
 Unto my childhood's home,
 To reach her side, my thoughts were fain
 To backward turn and roam
 By hill and valley, and low-whispering stream,
 Where we once wandered, in that long past dream.

O long-past merry gatherings,
 By river, field and shore,
 O dear old playmates, dead or gone,
 We meet on earth no more !
 No more upon the river's breast we row,
 Our voices singing—as we homeward go—
 The old " Canadian Boat Song," soft and low.

No more, with gay, light hearts, we pluck
 The trailing, sweet May-bloom,
Alas ! we gather oftenest now
 Dead leaves from some loved tomb.
The dear old faces ! all are missing now,
Or meet us with strange lines upon their brow.

The hands that soothed our childish griefs
 Have long since turned to clay ;
The feet we loved to walk beside
 Have gone another way,
That leadeth past the narrow graveyard sod,—
Past sin and death, unto the “ Hills of God.”

And yesterday I came and stood
 Beside the well-known door,
To see my friend, my life-long friend,
 And speak with her once more,
To kiss her lips, one last farewell to say,
Then, sadly satisfied, to go my way.

But all the house was strangely still,
 I waited,—then—a hand
Grasped mine with sympathetic clasp,
 Easy to understand.

I entered in, to kiss,—a coffin plate !
 With eyes too blind to read the name, or date,—
I only knew that I had come *too late*.

St. John, N.B., July 30, 1884.

AT EVENTIDE.

As when the sun has gone unto his rest,
In crimson glow, behind the purple hill,
Some gentle radiance of a glory past,
On spire and cottage window lingers still.

So, too, when with worn feet, down life's hill-side
We take our lonely way, at eventide,
The glow of sunset in the crimson West
Lights up our faces, with the hope of *rest* /

All clearly outlined 'gainst the flaming sky,
Black hills and gabled roofs in shadow lie,
'Tis thus our sorrows and our wrongs sink low
And are forgotten in life's sunset glow.

For, O, behind those grim black hills' dark crest
Lies a sweet valley of eternal rest ;
And safe beyond this life's last dying gleam
Lies the *fruition* of our heart's dear dream !

O lurid glow of vanishing daylight !
Upon thy fading beauty falls the night ;
So, on our faces, Heavenward turned, at last
Shine light of eventide when day is past.

MASKS.

O God ! the mask our face is !
With its smiles and laughter lit !
While beneath, like some wild ocean,
Our heart, in fierce commotion,
Writhes, tortured under it.

How we speak, with quiet voices,
And no tremor of a breath
Tells of all the grim restriction,
Hiding pangs of crucifixion,
And worse agony than death !

Look up ! O poor masked faces,
Where the clouds the Heavens hide ;
All your heart-wrung smiles and laughter
Shall be *understood—hereafter*
When the masks are laid aside.

June 11th, 1884.

AFTER THE RAIN.

Shining and green are the maple leaves,
Washed from the soiling of dust and stain,
Filled with a murmuring grateful breeze,
After the rain.

How the wild storm on my red rose bed
Beat out its pitiless floods amain,
Sweeter than ever each lifts its head,
After the rain.

Down by the river a waving field
Of daisies and buttercups, nodding, vain,
Glimmers and gleams, like a golden shield,
After the rain.

Freshness and beauty the showers bring ;
And from the wayside-dust low lain,
Down-trodden, hidden, new blossoms spring,
After the rain.

Deeper the blue upon sky and sea,
Whiter the sails on the heaving main,
Laden the winds with new melody,
After the rain.

Sweetest the eyes that have had to weep,
Tend'rest the hearts that have borne most pain,
Brightest the sun that, through storm-clouds deep,
Breaks—After the rain.

WAITING.

The years have gone by that were squandered and lost,
And with pale shaking lips I have counted the cost
Of the love I have wasted, and shipwrecked, for just
A poor "handful" of wind-scattered ashes and dust.

I sit by a hearthstone whose embers are dead,
And stretch out my hands for a warmth that has fled ;
I watch for a shadow to darken the wall,
And listen, and wait, for a longed-for footfall.

I start at the rustle of leaves, or the sigh
Of the wind in the elms, as it hurrieth by ;
While the darkness comes down like a funeral-pall,
As I wearily wait for that cherished footfall.

O, form that has vanished, O love that has flown—
That has crossed my life's threshold, and left me alone !
'Tis in vain that I wait in the darkness, and call ;
You *may* not return !—O, beloved footfall !

O, open the shroud that enfoldeth your breast,
And let me share with you its quiet and rest.
What is ' *living* ' without you? what is death, after all,
But the coming at last, of a longed-for footfall ?



In Memoriam.



M. J. N.

Born July, 1869 ; Died Feb., 1870.

O, Baby Margaret, my Pearl,
My little summer blossom !
Blooming ever more, in peace,
Upon Our Lady's bosom !

Sweet fair Baby Margaret,
In my selfish blindness,
I begged hard to keep you, pet ;
God, in truer kindness,

Took my little Margaret,
My little fair white blossom,
And laid her tenderly upon
His Blessed Mother's bosom.

She will give you back to me
Some quiet, quiet even,—
When, my purgatory past,
I may enter Heaven.

O, my darling, I am glad,
When the thought comes o'er me,
That when I am called to go,
You are there before me !

O my little Margaret,
Snow-white, sinless blossom !
Pray for "mother," where you lie,
On our Lady's bosom.

MARY AGNES.

Born Aug., 1867; Drowned Aug., 1874.

Her last words every night—

“ Good night, Papa, and God bless you.”

When all the “ night prayers ” reverently

By her sweet lips are said,

And all she loves best prayed for, both

The living and the dead,

She lifts her blue eyes dreamily,

Aglow with loving light,

And throws her arms around his neck :—

“ Good night, Papa, good night,

And God bless you ! ”

Good night, Mary ! a long good night !

My loving, sweetest pet,

Your voice still rings within mine ears,

I think I hear it yet :

“ Good night, Papa, good night,

And God bless you ! ”

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O little Mary, little love !

Lent for so short a space—

The “ night ” will never end for us,

Until we see your face.

Ah when the cruel waters closed
Above those sweet blue eyes !
What hope and joy went down with them,
No more on Earth to rise !
But *you*, O darling child, awoke
With God—in Paradise !

REST AND PEACE.

FRANCIS B. LIGUORI.

Born July, 1865 ; Died June, 1879.

'Tis over now—and pain is past,
Close the blue eyes, so dim !
For rest and peace have come at last,
Have come at last—to *him* !

But not to *me*, ah, not to *me* !
My pain has but begun,
And all my soul in anguish cries,
“ Francis ! my son ! my son ! ”

His poor white hands, so worn and thin,
Cross on his silent breast,
His wounded feet together lay—
“ So — rest, my darling, rest ! ”

But “ *rest*,” for me ? No, nevermore,
Till my sad life shall cease,
And God shall send my darling down
To bring *me* rest and peace.

AT THE "HERMITAGE."

R. C. Cemetery.

O peaceful city, so silent are thy streets,
 I hear no sound save my own steps that tread
 Thy lonely walks, with weary feet and slow,
 To find the spot where my love lieth dead.

The snow has drifted o'er that narrow grave,
 And the March wind goes thro' me, as I kneel
 Beside my darling's bed, who heeds me not,
 Nor hears the "Vesper Bells," that faintly peal

Thro' the still air this Sunday afternoon,
 A year ago, earth did not seem so drear !
 For hope and love were *living* ! *now* they lie,
 Coffined and buried deep, in this grave, here.

* * * * *

O silent hearts, I, sick with grief and weeping
 And sense of such irreparable loss,
 Must turn my steps, and leave you, in God's holy keeping,
 Beneath the peaceful shadow of the graveyard cross !

March, 1880.

STRONGER THAN DEATH.

Tho' it is all past and over now,
And hardly worth recalling,
Yet I cannot help looking back again
Upon all the useless, bitter pain,
Knowing now it was all in vain,
While quiet tears are falling.

O, fruitless prayers, that could not keep
My love one hour longer !
O clinging arms ! O heart that bled !
O tears that scalded like molten lead !
How I prayed to *die*, because *he* was dead ;
And *death* than *love* was stronger.

I never thought of that wise God
My wild, wild grief offended,
For, numb with pain, I *could* not pray,
I never knew the night from day,
I only knew where my dead love lay,—
The world for me had ended.

* * * * *

Long years have passed since then, and I
Have learned, as I tarry longer,
That *living sorrows* are hardest to bear,
Death is but sweet release from care,
And God is good, and answers prayer,
Keeping my darling for me, where
His love than death is stronger.

April, 1882.

AT HIS GRAVE.

“Qui non præcesserunt cum signo Fidei, et dormiunt in somno Pacis.”

How soundly thou hast slept
Thro' all these years !
No moan or sad complaint
Hath reached thine ears,
Or pangs of sorrow wet
Thine eyes with tears.

No one hath wakened thee
From thy long sleep,
No one hath bidden thee,
“Arise,” to weep,
No storms disturb thy rest,
So calm, so deep !

Thou hast not heard my prayer,
So far away !
Thou hast not missed my care
By night or day,—
Sleeping so soundly there,
In peace, I pray.

For thee, the morning brings
No dread or pain
For thee, the night wind moaneth
All in vain ;—
Thou hearest, my lost love !
A sweeter strain.

No phantoms mock thy dreams,
 No ice nor snow
 Can chill thee with their breath,
 Or summer's glow
 Warm thy young breast again
 My love to know.

No words of mine can reach
 To where thou art,
 Nor sign from thee may come
 To heal my heart,
 So vast the heights that hold
 Our souls apart.

Sleep on, for *thee* the years,
 Unheeded fly,
Thy dreams are full of *rest*,
 But *I*
 Grow weary, waiting for
 Thy company.

O sleep, my darling, sleep,
 Tho' deep and wide
 The sea, that our two souls
 Doth now divide,
 Shall drift us, afterwards,
 Close, side by side.

Sleep on, in peace. Some day,
A little space
Of matted grass and weeds,
That hide thy face,
Shall be upturned, to make
For *me* a place.

TIRED.

So tired waiting,—

Waiting for the end,
The end of all this useless, thankless, striving,
This long, long weariness that we call “living”—
The end of dreams that bring such sad awaking
Of disappointment, and the heart's slow breaking,

So tired waiting,

Waiting for the end !

So tired waiting,—

Waiting for the night
That ends the heart's delirium and fever,
When all its fears are lulled to rest, forever ;
The still, sweet night, with starlight shining over,
And we, asleep, beneath the blooming clover !

So tired waiting,

Waiting for the night !

So tired waiting,—

Waiting for the end
Of all misunderstandings and soul-hunger,
When lack of love shall trouble us no longer,
When a white shroud shall cover up our faces,
And better people fill our vacant places.

So tired waiting,

Waiting for the end,

So tired waiting,—
Waiting to go Home,
Where those who loved us, *all*, are gone before us,
And miss *our* voices from the Heavenly chorus.
Before the looming shadows thicker gather,
Before we *lose our way*, O God, our Father,
We are so tired,
Let us go Home !

Bay Shore, Carleton, Aug., 1884.

